

Amendments to the Drawings

FIG. 2 is amended herein to replace line XII-XII with line VII-VII. A replacement sheet of amended FIG. 2 is attached hereto. Support for this amendment may be found at least on page 16, line 2 of the specification.

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request that the amendment be entered as the amendments to the claims were made solely to resolve the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 and place the claims in condition for allowance. The amendments do not require further search and/or consideration.

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-6 and 22-26 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 22 being the independent claims. Claims 7-13 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Support for the amendments to claims 1 and 22 may be found in the specification at least on page 17, lines 19-22. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Interview Summary

Applicants thank the Examiner for conducting a telephonic interview with Applicants' representative on June 12, 2007. The objection to the drawings and the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraph were discussed. In particular, Applicants' representative pointed to FIGS. 1, 5, and 7 to explain to the Examiner that filter 902 and its associated filter cap are not part of the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing. The Examiner indicated he would take

the arguments into consideration when presented in writing in response to the office action.

Objections to the Drawings

The drawings are objected to for not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims, particularly the language of claims 1 and 22, which recite the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodates transmission shafts. The Examiner was particularly concerned with filter 902 and its associated filter cap (cylindrical element to the immediate left of filter 902 in FIG. 2). Applicants traverse this objection.

The Figures do show the recited feature of claims 1 and 22 that the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodates transmission shafts. As best seen in FIGS. 2, 5, and 7, the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing, as defined by walls 121a, 121b, and 121c, only accommodates transmission shafts 150, 220, and 260. The filter 902 and its associated filter cap are exterior to the intermediate housing and are not accommodated by the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing.

As shown in FIGS. 1, 2, 5-8, 13, and 15, filter 902 and its associated filter cap (cylindrical element to the immediate left of filter 902 in FIG. 2) are exterior to the intermediate housing. Filter 902 is inserted in the transmission case and the filter cap is bolted to the exterior of the transmission case as best seen in FIG. 15. Further, FIGS. 5 and 7 show the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing as defined by walls

121a, 121b, and 121c and filter 902 and its associated filter cap are clearly not within the boundary of the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing.

The Figures do show the claimed feature of claims 1 and 22 that the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodates transmission shafts.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claims 1-6 and 22-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Examiner stated the disclosure and Figures do not show that the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodates transmission shafts. The Examiner was particularly concerned with filter 902 and its associated filter cap (cylindrical element to the immediate left of filter 902 in FIG. 2). Applicants traverse this rejection.

The disclosure, as originally filed, has literal support for the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodating transmission shafts. In particular, the disclosure states,

[N]o transmission units such as a speed change mechanism and a clutch mechanism are disposed in the intermediate housing 120. That is, only the transmission shafts such as a main shaft 150 and a propeller shaft 220 respectively connected to the drive shaft 200 and the driven shaft 210 are accommodated in the intermediate housing.

Specification, p. 23, lines 7-12. Accordingly, the disclosure complies with the written description requirement as there is literal support in the specification, as filed, for

claiming that the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodates transmission shafts.

In addition, as noted above in addressing the objections to the drawings, the Figures provide support for the recited feature of claims 1 and 22 that the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodates transmission shafts. As best seen in FIGS. 2, 5, and 7, the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing, as defined by walls 121a, 121b, and 121c, only accommodates transmission shafts 150, 220, and 260. The filter 902 and its associated filter cap are exterior to the intermediate housing and are not accommodated by the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing.

Also, as shown in FIGS. 1, 2, 5-8, 13, and 15, filter 902 and its associated filter cap (cylindrical element to the immediate left of filter 902 in FIG. 2) are exterior to the intermediate housing. Filter 902 is inserted in the transmission case and the filter cap is bolted to the exterior of the transmission case as best seen in FIG. 15. Further, FIGS. 5 and 7 show the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing as defined by walls 121a, 121b, and 121c and filter 902 and its associated filter cap are clearly not within the boundary of the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing as defined by walls 121a, 121b, and 121c.

Accordingly, the disclosure complies with the written description requirement as there is support in the specification and figures, as filed, for claiming that the hollow body portion of the intermediate housing only accommodates transmission shafts. Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn and that claims 1-6 and 22-26 be allowed.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-6 and 22-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants disagree with these rejections, but in the interest furthering prosecution the claims have been amended to address the rejections.

With regards to the use of the phrase "can pass" in claims 1 and 22, the claims have been amended herein to indicate that the first abutting surface includes a first opening that is sized to allow a flywheel to pass therethrough and that the second abutting surface includes a second opening that is sized to allow a forward/rearward movement switching unit to pass therethrough.

With regards to the use of the phrase "such as" in claims 1 and 22, the claims have been amended herein to remove that language.

With regards to the use of the phrase "as close as possible" in claim 1, the claim has been amended herein to remove that language.

Accordingly, Applicants believe the amendments to the claims have resolved the above-mentioned issues. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that claims 1-6 and 22-26 be allowed.

Conclusion

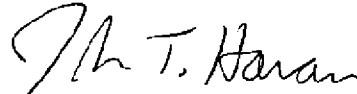
All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the

Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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